

# ELKINS FAMILY LAW TASK FORCE UPDATE



JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA  
ELKINS FAMILY LAW TASK FORCE

JUNE 2009

In the last year, the Elkins Family Law Task Force has been gathering information and developing recommendations to increase access to justice, ensure due process, and provide for more effective and consistent rules, policies, and procedures in California's family courts. The task force has collected input and information from multiple sources, including focus groups with litigants, judicial officers, attorneys, and court staff; a survey of attorneys; a meeting with a litigant and advocate input group, and extensive public comments given in person and at task force meetings and received through the mail and the Elkins Web site.

The recommendations now under development will address a broad range of topics, including rules and forms, case management, children's voices, representation, judicial branch and litigant education, minor's counsel, contested custody, domestic violence, live testimony, removal of barriers, resource needs, safety, accountability, and leadership.

Issues and topics are being further researched, discussed, and refined over the summer. After the task force discussion in August, all consensus draft recommendations will be written up and released for public comment. The two-month public comment period—expected to be from September to October—will give all interested stakeholders the opportunity to review, weigh in, raise concerns, and suggest modifications to the recommendations before they are provided to the Judicial Council.

The task force continues to receive input and suggestions through its ongoing public comment process. We encourage all interested stakeholders to send suggestions about issues that have not yet been identified so that the task force may consider them in this phase of its work. To submit comments or suggestions, please e-mail [elkinstaskforce@jud.ca.gov](mailto:elkinstaskforce@jud.ca.gov).

The task force is particularly interested in receiving input on the following:

- What do you think are the most significant or important issues the task force should address in its recommendations to the Judicial Council?
- What suggestions or concerns do you have about the development of recommendations on the following issues: rules and forms, case management, children's voices, representation, judicial branch and litigant education, minor's counsel, contested custody, domestic violence, live testimony, removal of barriers, resource needs, safety, accountability, and leadership?

- Are there additional topics or issues that you think the task force should address?

**Contacts**

If you have any questions about the work of the task force, please contact:  
elkinstaskforce@jud.ca.gov

***Additional Resource***

Elkins Family Law Web Site: [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/elkins.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/elkins.htm)